

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-14 (canceled).

Claim 15 (currently amended): A method for regulating growth of a frozen cooling bank in a beverage dispensing system, comprising:

monitoring sensor units positioned at different sides of ~~locations about~~ the frozen cooling fluid bank to determine the size and shape of the frozen cooling bank;

starting a cooling unit if the sensor units indicate the frozen cooling bank does not cover a selected freeze point on all the sensor units; and

stopping the cooling unit if the sensor units indicate the frozen cooling bank covers the selected freeze point on all the sensor units.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The method according to claim 15, further comprising stopping the cooling unit if the sensor units indicate the frozen cooling bank has problematic overgrowth at any one of the sensor units.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The method according to claim 15, further comprising determining the status of all variables considered when selecting a freeze point.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The method according to claim 17, further comprising selecting the freeze point based upon the conditions of the variables.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The method according to claim 17, wherein the variables considered are selected from the group consisting of freeze cycle, cycle times, ambient temperature, dispensing valve temperature, humidity, water source temperature, flavored syrup source temperature, energy use, time of day, and carbon dioxide source temperature.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The method according to claim 15, wherein the variable considered is a freeze cycle.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The method according to claim 20, wherein determining the variable status of "first-freeze" results in a selection of a freeze point to produce a smaller frozen cooling bank.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The method according to claim 20, wherein determining the variable status of “not a first-freeze” results in a selection of a freeze point to produce a larger frozen cooling bank.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The method according to claim 15, wherein the variable considered is ambient temperature.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The method according to claim 23, wherein determining the variable status of “low ambient temperature” results in a selection of a freeze point to produce a smaller frozen cooling bank.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method according to claim 23, wherein determining the variable status of “high ambient temperature” results in a selection of a freeze point to produce a larger frozen cooling bank.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The method according to claim 15, wherein the variable considered is dispensing valve temperature.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The method according to claim 26, wherein determining the variable status of “dispensing valve temperature loading” results in a selection of a freeze point to produce a larger frozen cooling bank.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The method according to claim 15, further comprising running the cooling unit if overgrowth sensed by any one of the sensor units is not problematic.